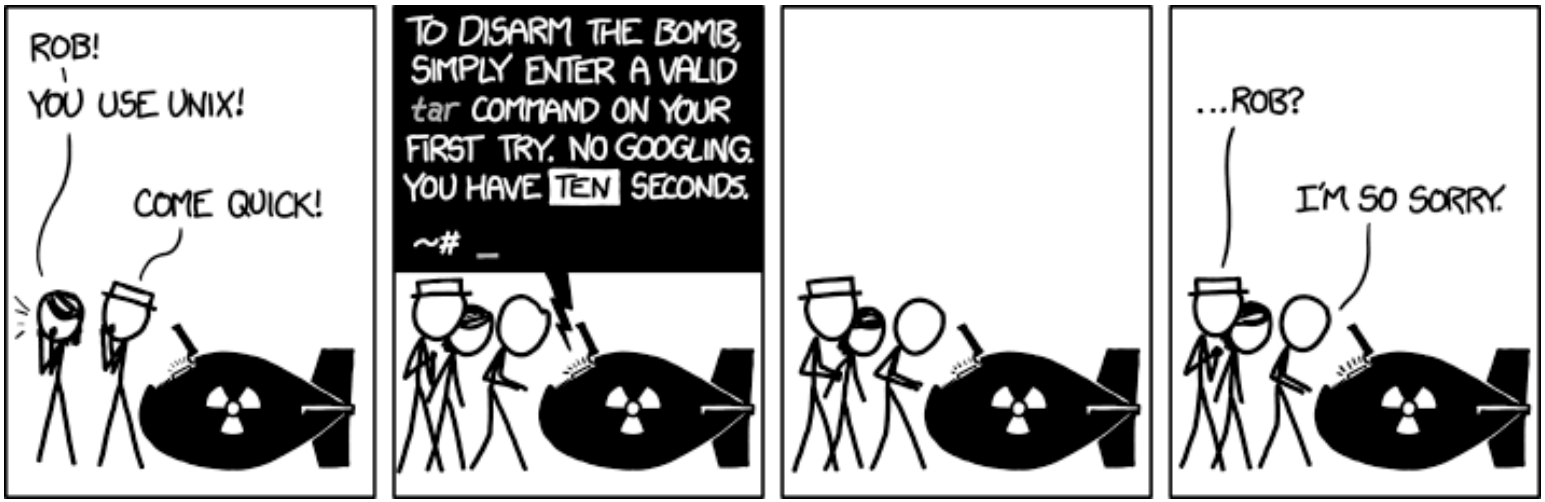
Structs and Alignment

CSE 351 Spring 2018



http://xkcd.com/1168/

Administrivia

- Homework 3 due Wednesday
- Lab 3 released, due next week
- Lab 2 and midterm will be graded this week
  - [in that order]

Roadmap

C:

```
car *c = malloc(sizeof(car));
c->miles = 100;
c->gals = 17;
float mpg = get_mpg(c);
free(c);
```

Java:

```
Car c = new Car();
c.setMiles(100);
c.setGals(17);
float mpg =
    c.getMPG();
```

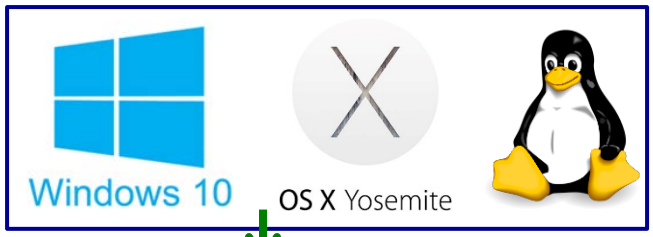
Assembly language:

```
get_mpg:
    pushq   %rbp
    movq    %rsp, %rbp
    ...
    popq    %rbp
    ret
```

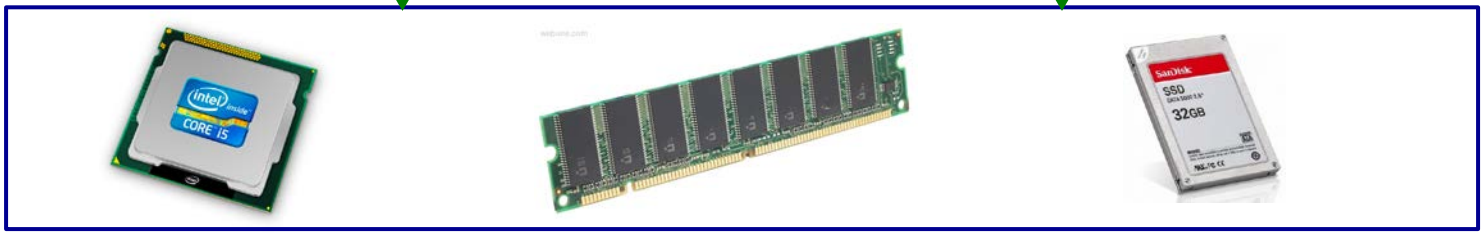
Machine code:

```
0111010000011000
100011010000010000000010
1000100111000010
11000001111110100011111
```

OS:



Computer system:



- Memory & data
- Integers & floats
- x86 assembly
- Procedures & stacks
- Executables
- Arrays & structs
- Memory & caches
- Processes
- Virtual memory
- Memory allocation
- Java vs. C

Data Structures in Assembly

- Arrays
  - One-dimensional
  - Multi-dimensional (nested)
  - Multi-level
- **Structs**
  - **Alignment**
- **Unions**

Structs in C

- Way of defining compound data types
- A structured group of variables, possibly including other structs

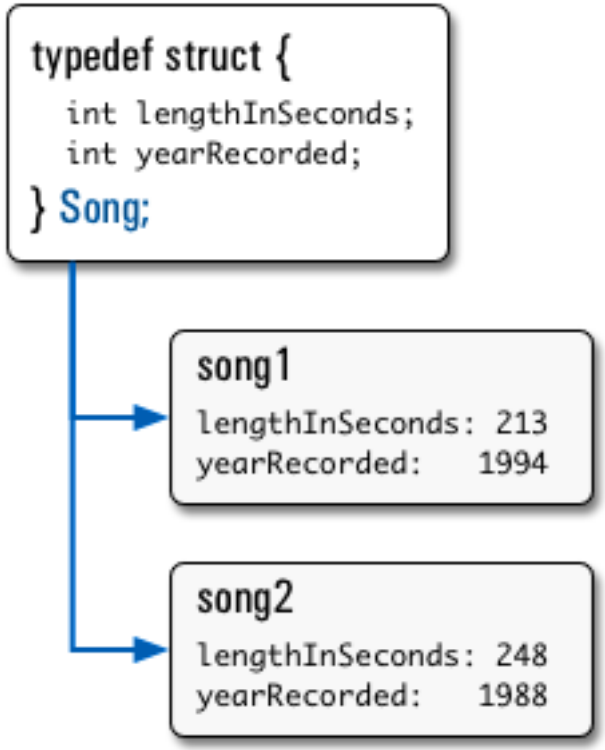
```
typedef struct {
  int lengthInSeconds;
  int yearRecorded;
} Song;

Song song1;

song1.lengthInSeconds =  213;
song1.yearRecorded    = 1994;

Song song2;

song2.lengthInSeconds =  248;
song2.yearRecorded    = 1988;
```



Struct Definitions

- Structure definition:
  - Does NOT declare a variable
  - New type written "**`struct name`**"

```
struct name {
   /* fields */
};
```

Easy to forget semicolon!

pointer

```
struct name name1, *pn, name_ar[3];
```

array

- Joint struct definition and typedef
  - Don't need to give struct a name in this case

```
struct nm {
   /* fields */
};
typedef struct nm name;
name n1;
```

```
typedef struct {
   /* fields */
} name;
name n1;
```

Scope of Struct Definition

- Why is placement of struct definition important?
  - What actually happens when you declare a variable?
    - Creating space for it somewhere!
  - Without definition, program doesn't know how much space

```
struct data {
   int ar[4];
   long d;
};
```

← Size = _____ bytes

Size = _____ bytes →

```
struct rec {
   int a[4];
   long i;
   struct rec* next;
};
```

- Almost always define structs in global scope near the top of your C file
  - Struct definitions follow normal rules of scope

Accessing Structure Members

- Given a struct instance, access member using the . operator:

```
struct rec r1;
r1.i = val;
```

```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
};
```

- Given a *pointer* to a struct:

```
struct rec *r;
r = &r1;  // or malloc space for r to point to
```

We have two options:

- Use * and . operators: `(*r).i = val;`
- Use -> operator for short: `r->i = val;`

- **In assembly:** register holds address of the first byte
  - Access members with offsets

Java side-note

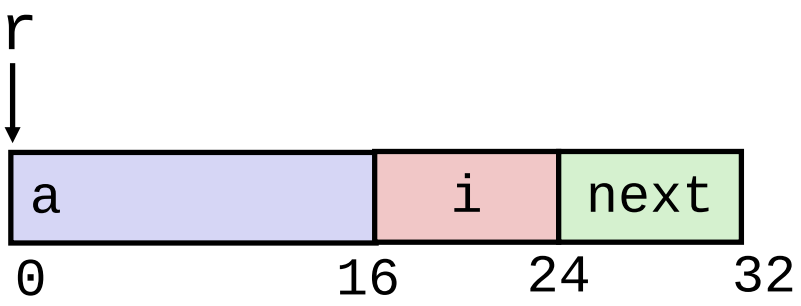
```
class Record { ... }
Record x = new Record();
```

- An instance of a class is like a *pointer to* a struct containing the fields
  - (Ignoring methods and subclassing for now)
  - So Java's `x.f` is like C's `x->f` or `(*x).f`

- In Java, almost everything is a pointer ("*reference*") to an object
  - Cannot declare variables or fields that are structs or arrays
  - Always a *pointer* to a struct or array
  - So every Java variable or field is ≤ 8 bytes (but can point to lots of data)

Structure Representation

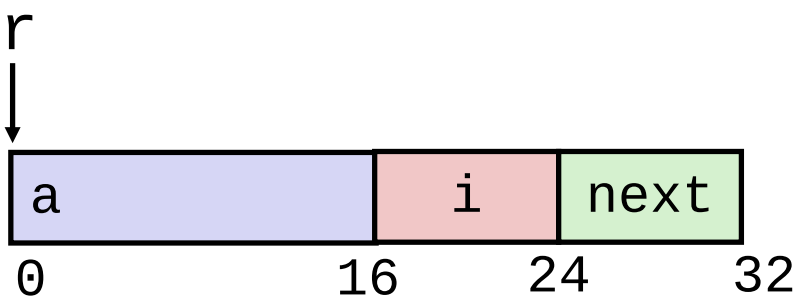
```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
} *r;
```



- Characteristics
  - Contiguously-allocated region of memory
  - Refer to members within structure by names
  - Members may be of different types

Structure Representation

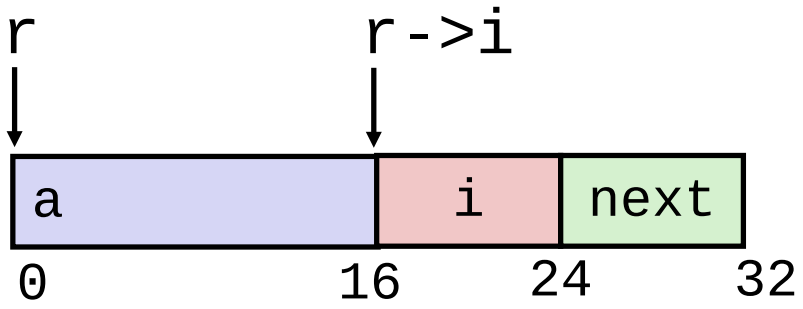
```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
} *r;
```



- Structure represented as block of memory
  - Big enough to hold all the fields
- Fields ordered according to declaration order
  - Even if another ordering would be more compact
- Compiler determines overall size + positions of fields
  - Machine-level program has no understanding of the structures in the source code

Accessing a Structure Member

```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
} *r;
```



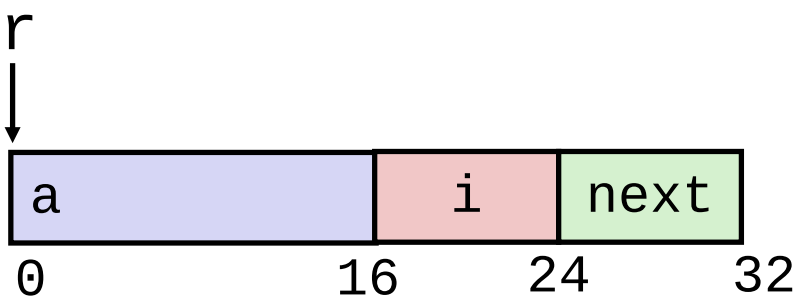
- Compiler knows the *offset* of each member within a struct
  - Compute as `*(r+offset)`

```
long get_i(struct rec *r)
{
  return r->i;
}
```

```
  # r in %rdi, index in %rsi
  movq  16(%rdi), %rax
  ret
```

Exercise: Pointer to Structure Member

```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
} *r;
```




```
long* addr_of_i(struct rec *r)
{
  return &(r->i);
}
```

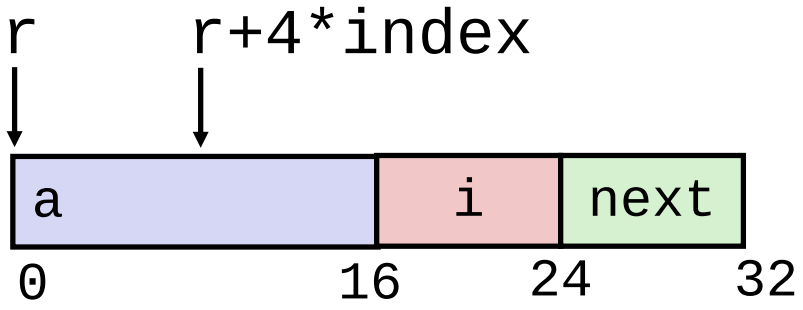
```
  # r in %rdi
  _______  ___________,%rax
  ret
```

```
struct rec** addr_of_next(struct rec *r)
{
  return &(r->next);
}
```

```
  # r in %rdi
  _______  ___________,%rax
  ret
```

Generating Pointer to Array Element

```
struct rec {
    int a[4];
    long i;
    struct rec *next;
} *r;
```



- Generating Pointer to Array Element
  - Offset of each structure member determined at compile time
  - Compute as: `r+4*index`

```
int* find_addr_of_array_elem
  (struct rec *r, long index)
{
  return &r->a[index];
}
```

`&(r->a[index])`

```
  # r in %rdi, index in %rsi
  leaq  (%rdi,%rsi,4), %rax
  ret
```

Review: Memory Alignment in x86-64

- For good memory system performance, Intel recommends data be aligned
  - However the x86-64 hardware will work correctly regardless of alignment of data
- *Aligned* means that any primitive object of K bytes must have an address that is a multiple of K
- Aligned addresses for data types:

K	Type	Addresses
1	`char`	No restrictions
2	`short`	Lowest bit must be zero: $\ldots0_2$
4	`int, float`	Lowest 2 bits zero: $\ldots00_2$
8	`long, double, *`	Lowest 3 bits zero: $\ldots000_2$
16	`long double`	Lowest 4 bits zero: $\ldots0000_2$

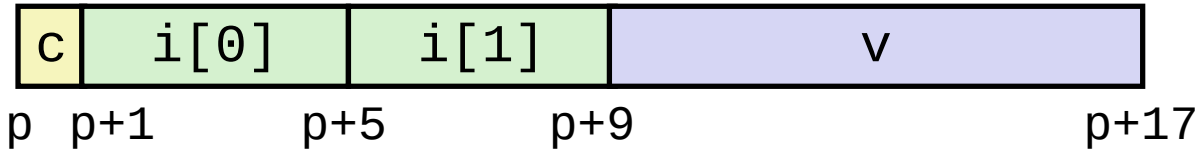
Alignment Principles

- Aligned Data
  - Primitive data type requires K bytes
  - Address must be multiple of K
  - Required on some machines; advised on x86-64

- Motivation for Aligning Data
  - Memory accessed by (aligned) chunks of 4 or 8 bytes (system dependent)
    - Inefficient to load or store value that spans quad word boundaries
    - Virtual memory trickier when value spans 2 pages (more on this later)

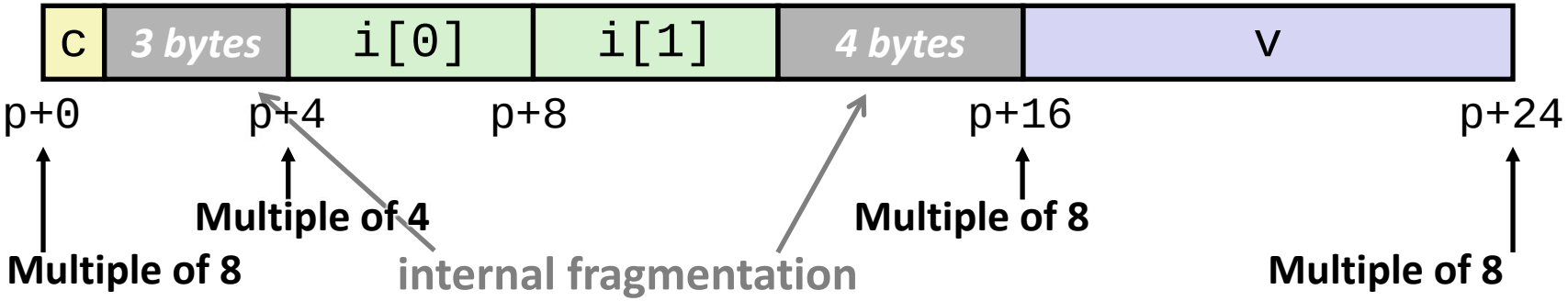
Structures & Alignment

- Unaligned Data




```
struct S1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *p;
```

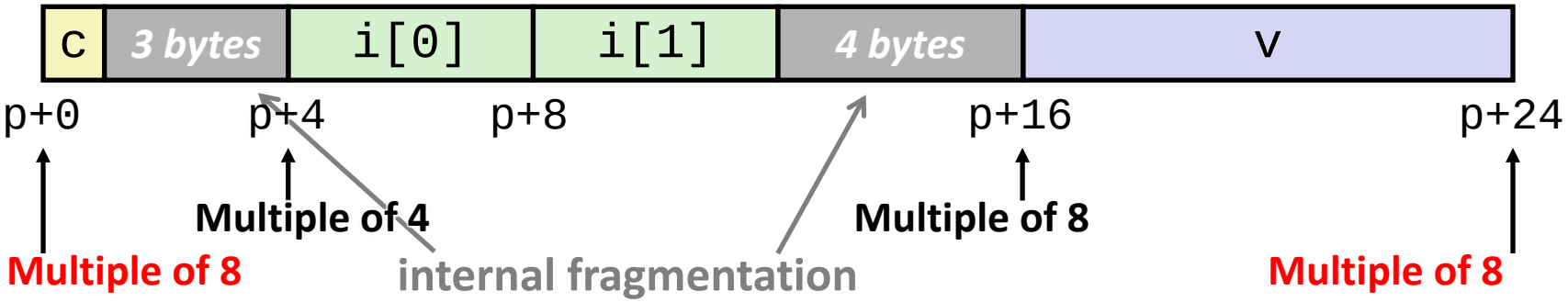
- Aligned Data
  - Primitive data type requires K bytes
  - Address must be multiple of K



Satisfying Alignment with Structures (1)

```
struct S1 {
  char c;
  int i[2];
  double v;
} *p;
```

- Within structure:
  - Must satisfy each element's alignment requirement
- Overall structure placement
  - Each structure has alignment requirement $K_{\max}$
    - $K_{\max}$ = Largest alignment of any element
    - Counts array elements individually as elements
  - **Address of structure & structure length must be multiples of $K_{\max}$**
- Example:
  - $K_{\max}$ = 8, due to `double` element

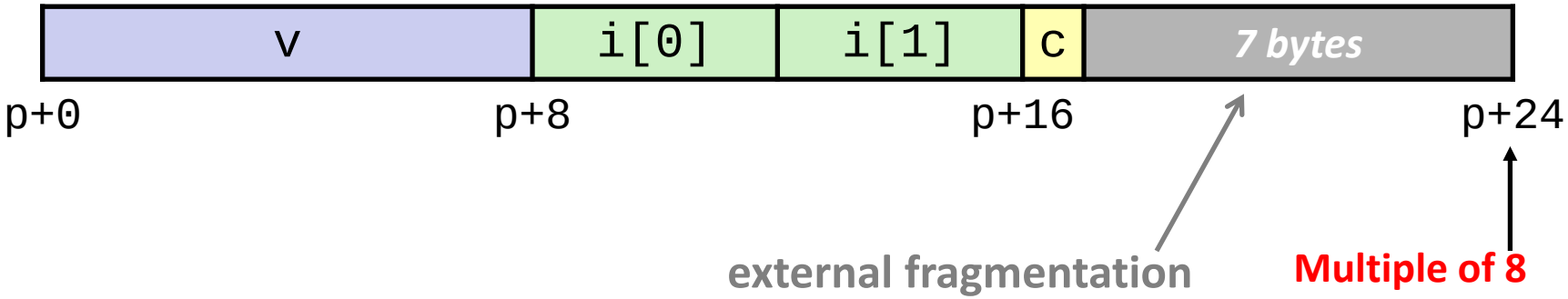


Satisfying Alignment with Structures (2)

- Can find offset of individual fields using `offsetof()`
  - Need to `#include <stddef.h>`
  - Example: `offsetof(struct S2,c)` returns 16

```
struct S2 {
  double v;
  int i[2];
  char c;
} *p;
```

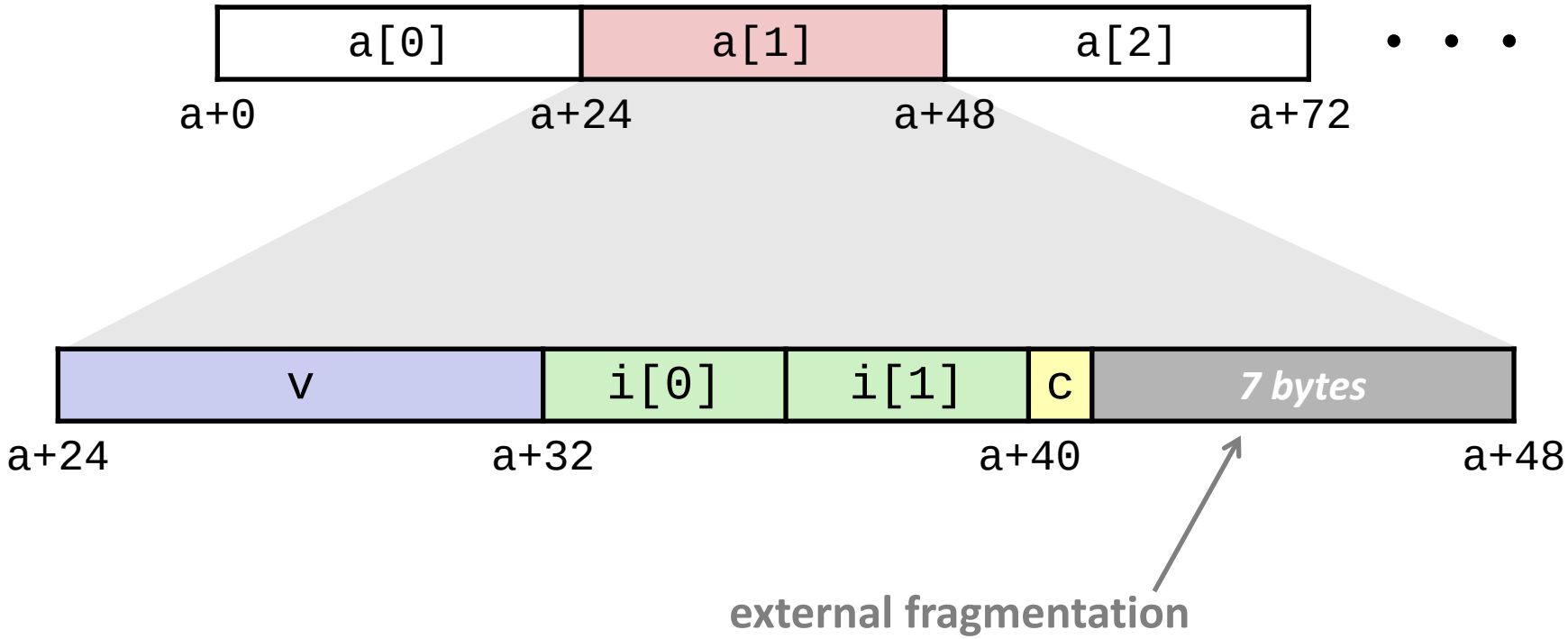
- For largest alignment requirement $K_{\max}$, overall structure size must be multiple of $K_{\max}$
  - Compiler will add padding at end of structure to meet overall structure alignment requirement



Arrays of Structures

- Overall structure length multiple of K_{max}
- Satisfy alignment requirement for every element in array

```
struct S2 {
  double v;
  int i[2];
  char c;
} a[10];
```



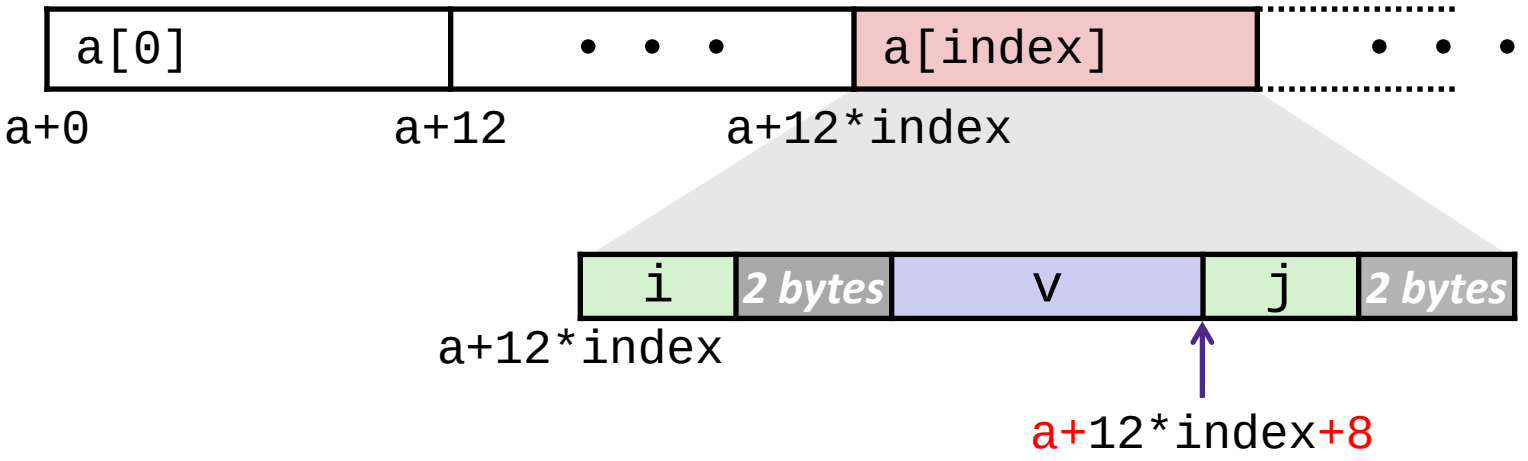
Alignment of Structs

- Compiler will do the following:
  - Maintains declared *ordering* of fields in struct
  - Each ***field*** must be aligned *within* the struct *(may insert padding)*
    - `offsetof` can be used to get actual field offset
  - Overall struct must be ***aligned*** according to largest field
    - Because of arrays to structs
  - Total struct ***size*** must be multiple of its alignment *(may insert padding)*
    - `sizeof` should be used to get true size of structs

Accessing Array Elements

- Compute start of array element as: `12*index`
  - `sizeof(S3)` = 12, including alignment padding
- Element `j` is at offset 8 within structure
- Assembler gives offset a+8

```
struct S3 {
  short i;
  float v;
  short j;
} a[10];
```




```
short get_j(int index)
{
  return a[index].j;
}
```

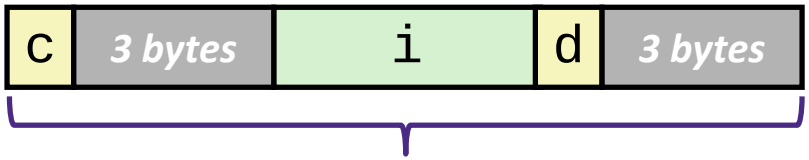
```
# %rdi = index
leaq (%rdi,%rdi,2),%rax  # 3*index
movzwl a+8(,%rax,4),%eax
```

How the Programmer Can Save Space

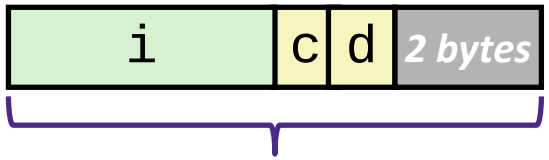
- Compiler must respect order elements are declared in
  - Sometimes the programmer can save space by declaring large data types first

```
struct S4 {
  char c;
  int i;
  char d;
} *p;
```

```
struct S5 {
  int i;
  char c;
  char d;
} *p;
```



12 bytes

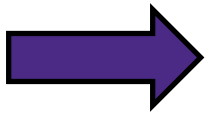


8 bytes

Peer Instruction Question

- Minimize the size of the struct by re-ordering the vars

```
struct old {
  int i;
  short s[3];
  char *c;
  float f;
};
```



```
struct new {
  int    i;
  _______ _______;
  _______ _______;
  _______ _______;
};
```

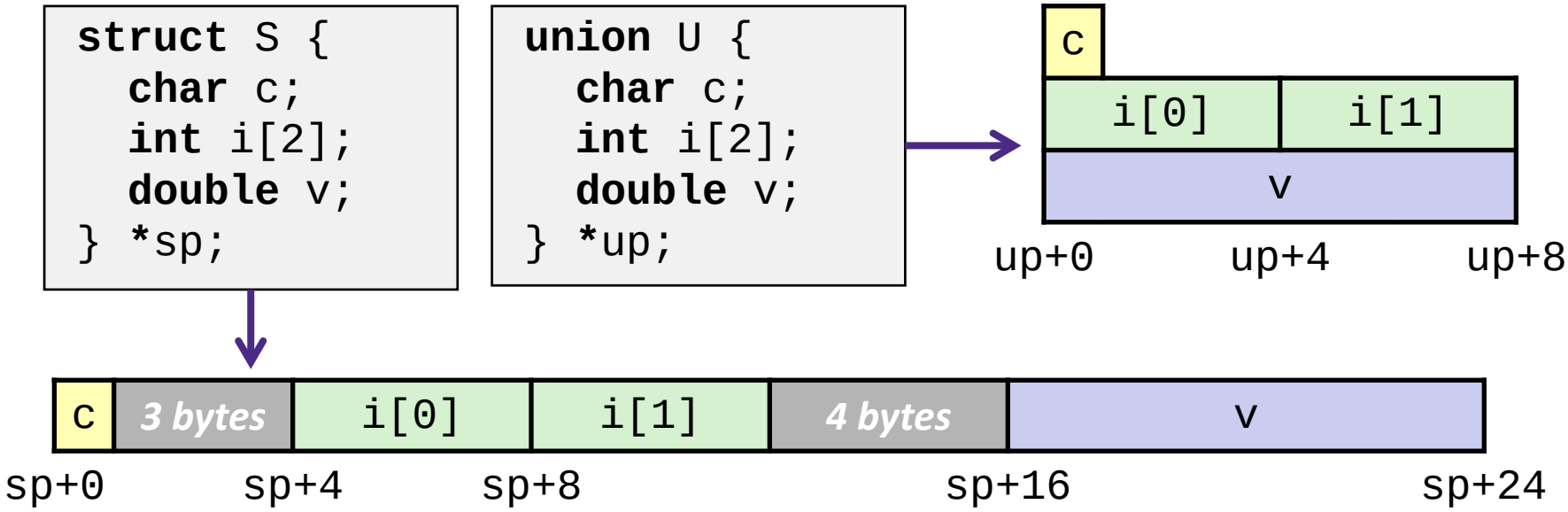
- What are the old and new sizes of the struct?

sizeof(struct old) = _____ sizeof(struct new) = _____

A. 22 bytes
B. 24 bytes
C. 28 bytes
D. 32 bytes
E. We're lost…

Unions

- Only allocates enough space for the largest element in union
- Can only use one member at a time



Summary

- Arrays in C
  - Aligned to satisfy every element's alignment requirement
- Structures
  - Allocate bytes in order declared
  - Pad in middle and at end to satisfy alignment
- Unions
  - Provide different views of the same memory location